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# CHICAGO DAILY NEWS

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## The Bright Side of Failure

IT WAS a happy coincidence that brought freedom to Fidel Castro's prisoners at Christmastime. But their stories confirm many of the worst fears about their treatment, and emphasize how far Castro has departed from the Golden Rule: "... whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them."

For Castro himself was once a prisoner, captured by former President Batista's forces in an abortive revolution. Batista, reviled as a "butcher," freed Castro without ransom, to return successfully another day, and to prove what butchery could really be.

As we commented last week, the ransom episode is a humiliating one, not only because it is a reminder of the fiasco at the Bay of Pigs, but for the galling contribution of \$53,000,000 worth of supplies to sustain the strutting Castro.

He tried hard to make the ransom an official payment from the U.S. government, labeled "indemnity," as a confession of guilty complicity in the April, 1961, invasion attempt.

Despite the efforts of President Kennedy to maintain the appearance that his administration was keeping aloof from the matter, the government is deeply involved. The medical supplies and foods that comprise the ransom were given to the Red Cross

by corporations that manufacture them. Thus they are tax deductible as charitable contributions.

The Internal Revenue Service has explored this subject with the concerns involved, and satisfied them that they will lose nothing. Since this is a waiver of revenue, it is the American taxpayers who are in fact contributing the ransom.

Quite possibly there will be an attempt in Congress to make political capital of the affair by objecting to this tax treatment. No doubt there will also be those who think the contributing corporations should not be so favored. The alternatives were two: We could permit men for whom we had a big measure of responsibility to rot in Castro's prison; we could contend that the cost of extricating them ought to be borne entirely by the stockholders of companies in the hospital supply business. Neither contention stands examination.

The deal, and the stories of the returning prisoners, expose the miseries of the Cuban people. The supplies will alleviate their suffering; no one can remain untouched by the happiness of the returnees and their families; the world has been given a peek at the true conditions in Communist Cuba. This is the bright side of the story; the succeeding chapters are in the hands of the gods.